

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01 SAM-01 IO-10 /077 W
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P R 131130 NOV 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1393

INFO: RUQMBI/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 55

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USINT BAGHDAD 792

FOLG MSG RECD LONDON VIA COURIER TRANSMITTED AS REQD

BY BAGHDAD

KUWAIT PASS DOHA AND MUSCAT

EMO. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IZ

SUBJECT: MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLE IN IRAQ

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1. SUMMARY: LARGEST CABINET RESHUFFLE SINCE BAATH PARTY TOOK POWER 1968 OCCURED NOVEMBER 11. FOUR MINISTERS WERE OUSTED, EIGHT NEW MINISTERS NAMED AND EIGHT HOLD-OVERS CHANGED JOBS. INITIAL ASSESSMENT IS THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN HAS CONSOLIDATED HIS CONTROL OF STATE MACHINERY AND STRENGTHENED INTERNAL COHESION OF REGIME BY PUTTING BAATHISTS LOYAL TO HIM IN KEY POSTS AND EXPELLING OR DOWNGRADING NON-BAATHISTS. ABOVE ALL, BAATH PARTY HAS DEMONSTRATED IT HAS NO INTENTION OF SHARING POWER WITH ICP, "ARAB NATION-ALISTS", OR ANY OTHER "PROGRESSIVE" ELEMENTS. LEVEL OF COMPETENCE OF NEW CABINET ALSO BELIEVED HIGHER. NEW FOREIGN MINISTER IS IRAQ'S RANKING TECHNOCRAT, U.S. EDUCATED FORMER MINISTER OF PETROLEUM SAADOUN HAMMADI. ON BALANCE, CHANGES SEEM TO AUGUR WELL FOR POLITICAL STABILITY AND CONTINUATION OF TREND TOWARD MORE NON-ALIGNED AND REALISTIC POLICIES. END SUMMARY.

2. MOST STRIKING ELEMENT IN MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLE (ASSUME LIST OF NAMES IN FBIS) NOVEMBER 11 APPEARS TO BE CONSOLIDATION OF CONTROL BY BAATH DEPUTY SECGEN AND RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSEIN. PRESIDENT AL-BAKR MAINTAINS ALSO HIS POSITION AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE BUT OTHERWISE SEEMS TO HAVE GAINED LITTLE. OF OTHER ACTIVE MEMBERS OF RCC, ONE MAINTAINED HIS POST (IZZAT MUSTAFA AS MINISTER OF HEALTH), ONE TOOK ON ADDED RESPONSIBILITIES (MINISTER OF INDUSTRY JAZRAWI NOW ALSO ACTING MINISTER OF PLANNING) AND ONE CHANGED POSTS (MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AD-DOURI TO INTERIOR). LAST REMAINING MILITARY MEMBER OF RCC BESIDES AL-BAKR, GENERAL SAADOUN GHAI DAN, WAS DOWNGRADED FROM INTERIOR TO COMMUNICATIONS. OTHER KNOWN MEMBER OF RCC, AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW MURTADA SIAD ABDUL BAQI, DID NOT FIGURE IN RESHUFFLE.

3. WHILE RCC APPEARS TO HAVE SUFFERED NET LOSS AS PRINCIPAL INSTITUTION OF THE STATE, REGIONAL BAATH PARTY LEADERSHIP MADE MAJOR GAINS. FIVE MEMBERS, INCLUDING SEVERAL ELECTED AT EIGHTH PARTY CONGRESS IN JANUARY 1974, MOVED INTO KEY MINISTERIAL POSTS AS FOLLOWS: NAIM HADDAD AS MINISTER OF YOUTH; TAYEH ABDUL KARIM AS MINISTER OF OIL; MOHAMMED MAHJOUB AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION; GHANIM ABDUL JALIL AS MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND CANDIDATE

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MEMBER TARIQ AZIZ AS MINISTER OF INFORMAION. THESE FIVE ARE CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN AND HAVE CONSIDERABLE BUREAUCRATIC EXPERIENCE AS WELL. NEW MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND FINANCE ARE BOTH RESPECTED TECHNOCRATS.

4. NON- BAATHISTS SUFFERED. OF FIVE KURDISH MINISTERS NAMED LAST APRIL, ONE OF TWO WITH PORTFOLIO WAS SWITCHED

FROM PUBLIC WORKS TO MINICIPALITIES AND THE SECOND, HASHIM AQRAWI, WAS DISMISSED FROM CABINET. NO COMMUNISTS WERE ADDED AND THEY CONTINUE TO HOLD THREE CABINET SEATS, ONLY ONE WITH PORTFOLIO (IRRIGATION). NATIONALISTS SUFFERED MOST; TWO WERE OUSTED (TABAQSHALI AND FAKRI AL-KHAFFAF) AND TWO WERE DEMOTED (HISHAM AL-SHWI AND JUWARI). MINISTER OF PLANNING JAWAD HASHIM, WHO WAS MOST PROMINENT SHIA IN REGIME, ALSO LOST HIS PORT.

5. ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT CHANGE WAS APPOINTMENT OF MINISTER OF OIL SAADOUN HAMMADI AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. AMERICAN EDUCATED HAMMADI IS KNOWN AS IRAQ'S PREMIER TECHNOCRAT AND HE HAS HAD BROAD INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE DURING SIX YEARS AS MINPET. ALTHOUGH HAMMADI WILL BE EXECUTOR RATHER THAN FORMULATOR OF POLICY, HIS APPOINTMENT IS ENCOURAGING SIGN FOR THE WEST. NEW PETROLEUM MINISTER TAYEH ABDUL KARIM, ACCORDING TO OUR LIMITED INFO, HAS BEEN MAINLY INVOLVED WITH PARTY AND AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS. HE IS EXPECTED TO BE MILITANT SPOKESMAN FOR SADDAM HUSSEIN'S "FOLLOW-UP" COMMITTEE WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO SET OIL POLICY.

6. COMMENT: VIRTUALLY EVERY KEY MINISTRY IS NOW IN HANDS OF BAATHIST MILITANTS WITH PAST ASSOCIATION WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN OR FILLED BY TECHNOCRATS. RESHUFFLE SHOULD THEREFORE GIVE NEW COHESIVENESS AND UNITY TO IRAQI REGIME. IT MAY ALSO MARK THE TRANSFER OF REAL AUTHORITY TO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WHICH COULD SPEED UP MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORT. ABOVE ALL, HOWEVER, CHANGES REPRESENT CONTINUAL DOMINATION OF BAATH PARTY AND STRENGTHENING OF ITS DIRECT CONTROL OVER ALL ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT.

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P R 131130 NOV 74

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AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 USINT BAGHDAD 792

KUWAIT PASS DOHA AND MUSCAT

7. PURGING OF "NATIONALISTS", DIMINUTION OF ROLE OF KURDS, AND FAILURE TO GIVE ICP ANY NEW PORTFOLIO DESPITE PARTICIPATION OF ALL THESE GROUPS IN NATIONAL FRONT, CLEARLY ILLUSTRATE DETERMINATION OF BAATH NOT TO SHARE POWER AND TO KEEP REGIME IDEOLOGICALLY PURE. THIS IS CERTAIN TO BE VIEWED ADVERSELY BY ICP AND USSR WHO HAVE BEEN PRESSING GOI TO EXPAND RULING INSTITUTIONS TO INCLUDE ALL "POPULAR AND PROGRESSIVE FORCES". COMMUNIST MINISTERS ARE NOW EVEN MORE HEAVILY OUTNUMBERED BY BAATHISTS AND WILL

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ALMOST CERTAINLY WANT TO RE-EVALUATE DESIRABILITY OF COOPERATING WITH THIS REGIME. SOVIETS AND OTHERS MAY ALSO READ MORE INTO APPOINTMENT OF HAMMADI AS GESTURE TOWARD U.S. THAN PROBABLY WARRANTED.

LOWRIE

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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